

THE  
ANNUAL REPORT  
OF THE  
SANITARY CONDITION  
OF THE  
BOROUGH OF BURY ST. EDMUND'S,  
FOR THE YEAR 1897

*(January 1st to December 31st inclusive),*

BY  
JAMES HODGES,

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

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CATLING, PRINTER, LOWER BAXTER STREET.



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## MEDICAL OFFICER'S REPORT.

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TO THE MAYOR, ALDERMEN, AND COUNCILLORS OF  
THE BOROUGH OF BURY ST. EDMUND'S.

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to submit to you the following, as my Report on the sanitary condition of the Borough of Bury St. Edmund's, during the year 1897, and at the same time I beg to express my regret at not being able to present it to you at your February Meeting, for reasons already stated.

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### MARRIAGES.

The number of Marriages in Bury St. Edmund's during the year 1897 was 105, 93 being the number in the previous year. The 105 Marriages correspond to a rate of 12.3 persons unmarried to 1,000 living, the average rate for England and Wales being 14 per 1,000 or thereabouts. Of the 105 Marriages, 61 took place in Churches, viz., 28 in St. Mary's; 15 in St. James'; and 18 in St. John's; 17 in Chapels; and 27 before the Registrar.

### BIRTHS.

The Births registered in the Borough during the year were 434, against 420 in 1896, four of which the mothers belonged outside the

town, so that the actual number of births belonging to the Borough becomes 430. There were 161 Births in St. Mary's Parish (including 9 in the Thingoe Union Workhouse, 7 of which were illegitimate and the other two legitimate). Of the 161 Births, 84 were Males and 77 Females; and of the whole number 17 were illegitimate. In St. James' Parish, 273 Births were registered; 131 being Males and 142 Females; 13 are returned as illegitimate, making a total of 30 illegitimate children born in the Borough during the year, 27 being the number for the year 1896. As stated above, the number of Births really belonging to the Borough is 430, which corresponds to an annual Birth-rate of 25.26 per 1,000 of the estimated population, viz., 17,019 the rate for the year 1896 being 24.52 per 1,000.

#### MORTALITY.

The total number of Deaths registered in the Borough during the year 1897, from all causes, amounted to 271; which, taking the population as estimated above, corresponds to an annual rate of mortality of 15.9 per 1,000 living. Allowing, however, for the deaths of 25 strangers to the town, occurring in Public Institutions, the number really belonging to the Borough becomes 246, and the death-rate for the year 14.4 per 1,000 accordingly, the rate for the previous year being 13.4 per 1,000. Although this is 1 per 1,000 higher than in 1896, 14.4 per 1,000 is still a very low death rate indeed.

Of the 271 Deaths, 84 occurred in St. Mary's Parish, 21 in the Thingoe Union Workhouse, 22 in the Suffolk General Hospital, none in the Isolation Hospital, and 144 in St. James' Parish. The following are the ages at which the Deaths occurred throughout the Borough during the year, arranged according to districts.

	St. Mary's Parish.	Thingoe Union Workhouse.	Suffolk General Hospital.	Isolation Hospital.	St. James' Parish.	Total.
Deaths under 1 year	15	2	0	0	37	54
Over 1 & under 5 yrs.	8	0	0	0	9	17
,, 5 ,,, 15 ,,	4	0	1	0	4	9
,, 15 ,,, 25 ,,	5	0	4	0	2	11
,, 25 ,,, 65 ,,	23	4	11	0	46	84
,, 65 yrs. & upwards	29	15	6	0	46	96
<b>Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>271</b>

The number of Deaths during the year from the principal Zymotic Diseases, that is to say, those that come under the Infectious Diseases Notification Act, amounts to five; seven being the number for the previous year; of these two were due to Diphtheria, one to Membranous Croup, one to Typhoid Fever, and one to Puerperal Fever. Of the two fatal cases of Diphtheria, one occurred in St. Mary's Parish, and the other in St. James'. The fatal case of Typhoid Fever occurred in the Suffolk General Hospital, and was that of a nurse who had been attending to a similar case away and who immediately on returning home to St. James' Parish, for a rest, went down with the disease, and was removed to the Suffolk General Hospital, where she had received her early training. The single case of Puerperal Fever occurred in St. James' Parish.

The five Deaths due to the above causes are equivalent to a Zymotic Death-rate of .29 per 1,000 of the estimated population, being decidedly less than that of the previous year, viz., .41 per 1,000.

The following table of Mortality is derived from that required by the Local Government Board, copies of which are forwarded with this Report to the Town Clerk and to the Clerk of the County Council. It may be considered with the previous table of Deaths according to ages.

DISEASES	St. Mary's Parish.		Thingoe Union Workhouse		Suffolk General Hospital.		Isolation Hospital.		St. James' Parish.	
	under 5 yrs.	over 5 yrs.	under 5 yrs.	over 5 yrs.	under 5 yrs.	over 5 yrs.	under 5 yrs.	over 5 yrs.	under 5 yrs.	over 5 yrs.
Small Pox ...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Scarlatina ...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Diphtheria ...	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Membranous Croup ...	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fever. Typhus ...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Typhoid ...	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Continued ...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Relapsing ...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Puerperal ...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Cholera ...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Erysipelas ...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Measles ...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Whooping-cough ...	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Diarrhoea and Dysentery	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Rheumatic Fever ...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ague ...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Phthisis ...	0	7	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	16
Bronchitis, Pneumonia, and Pleurisy } ...	7	8	1	1	0	0	0	0	15	8
Heart Disease ...	0	6	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	11
Injuries ...	0	3	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	4
All other diseases ...	12	35	1	16	0	13	0	0	26	57
Totals. ...	23	61	2	19	0	22	0	0	46	98

Total Deaths for the year, 271.

The 39 Deaths of children under 5 years of age, classified under the heading of "All other Diseases," may be roughly accounted for as follows:—Convulsions, Premature Birth, Debility from Birth, and the Wasting Diseases of Infants.

Of the 121 Deaths of persons above 5 years of age, from "All other Diseases," by far the greater number were those of aged persons, and none have any bearing whatever on the public health of the Borough.

#### INFANT MORTALITY.

There were 54 Deaths of Infants under one year of age; 49 being the number for the previous year. In St. Mary's Parish, there were 15; curiously, exactly the same number as in 1896, 2 in the Thingoe Union Workhouse; and 37 in St. James' Parish, which gives a percentage of 19·92 or, as nearly as possible, 20 per cent of the total Deaths. The rate of Infant Mortality, however, is usually measured by its proportion to the number of Births occurring during the same period, viz., 434; and it will then be found to be 12·44 per cent., a slight increase over that of the previous year, when the rate was 11·66 per cent., but still considerably below that of 1895, when it was 19·01 per cent.

#### AGED PERSONS.

The Deaths of Persons of 65 years and upwards reached the number of 96, or 35·41 per cent. of the total Deaths of the year, so that the Deaths of Infants and Old People together amount to more than half the number of the total Deaths for the year. There were 4 Deaths of persons of 90 years and upwards, belonging to the Borough, the greatest age recorded being 92; 22 of 80 and under 90 years; and 51 between 70 and 80 years; while of those dying in the Borough belonging outside 8 were 70 years and upwards, so that no less than 77 of the 96 who died over 65 years of age were over 70 years. Taking the ages of the 76 who reached 70 years and upwards, I find the average a little over 73 years.

#### INQUESTS.

During the year, 15 inquests have been held in the Borough, the causes of death being attributed in each case as follows:—4 due to Natural Causes; 8 Accidental; and 3 Suicide during temporary insanity. There were 14 Deaths registered as uncertified (curiously, exactly the same number as in 1896) by a Medical Practitioner, about which no Inquests were held; 8 being Infants (of which 5 were attributed to Premature Birth, 2 Debility from Birth, and one Convulsions). Of the rest, 1 to Syncope, 1 Heart Disease, 1 Convulsions, 2 Senile Decay and 1 Epileptiform.

## ZYMOTIC SICKNESS IN THE BOROUGH DURING THE YEAR.

During the year 1897 only 49 cases have been certified under the Infectious Diseases Notification Act, 75 being the number for the previous year, showing a decrease of 26. Of these, 15 were Scarlet Fever, 7 Diphtheria, 1 Membranous Croup, 10 Typhoid Fever, 1 Puerperal Fever, and 15 Erysipelas.

I am very pleased to be able to state that there has been no outbreak of any Disease during the year causing any of the Elementary Schools to be closed.

*Scarlet Fever.*—15 cases. Of the 15 cases of Scarlet Fever, 7 occurred in St. Mary's Parish, 1 in the Suffolk General Hospital, which really belonged to St. James' Parish, being the case of an Infant admitted into that Institution for Burns, who developed the disease the day after, and 7 others in St. James' Parish. Of the 7 cases notified in St. Mary's Parish, 4 occurred in one family in a very crowded neighbourhood, but by their prompt removal to the Isolation Hospital, I am glad to say there was no spread whatever of the disease in the locality. Of the 7 cases occurring in St. James' Parish, the whole were spread over nearly the whole of the year, but by their prompt isolation there was at no time any fear of a real outbreak of the disease. Of the whole 15 cases, 13 were removed to the Isolation Hospital, and all were of a comparatively mild type, there being not a single death attributed to this disease during the year.

*Diphtheria.*—7 cases. During the year 7 cases of Diphtheria have been notified against 12 in the previous year; of these, 3 occurred in St. Mary's Parish, and 4 in St. James'. One case occurring in St. James' Parish was removed to the Isolation Hospital. Two of the cases I am sorry to say terminated fatally, one in St. James' and the other in St. Mary's Parish.

*Typhoid Fever.*—10 cases. During the year I have received 10 notifications of Typhoid Fever, but in reality there were only 7 cases, for three were removed to the Suffolk General Hospital and consequently, under the Act, had to be re-notified by the House Surgeon there. This number, I am pleased to say, shows a very considerable falling off in comparison to the previous year, when there were 19 cases. There were one case in St. Mary's Parish and 6 in St. James'. With the exception of one case which I am sorry to say proved fatal, no distinct cause could be found to account for the disease. The fatal case as stated above was that of a nurse who had contracted the disease away. In consequence of the serious outbreak of Typhoid Fever occurring at Maidstone, the Sanitary Committee deemed it advisable that a sample of our Town water supply should be taken and sent to a special Analyst for examination, whose Report, I am pleased to say, is most satisfactory, a copy of which I include in this Report, later on.

*Puerperal Fever.*—1 case. During the year only one case of Puerperal Fever has been notified, which unfortunately proved fatal.

*Membranous Croup.*—1 case. The case of this disease occurred in St. Mary's Parish, in a young child, and unfortunately proved fatal.

*Erysipelas.*—15 cases. During the year, 15 cases of Erysipelas have been notified, 29 being the number in the previous year ; 11 (including 2 in the Suffolk General Hospital) occurring in St. Mary's Parish and 4 in St. James' Parish. The whole of the cases, as far as I have been able to ascertain, were idiopathic in nature, and there were no deaths during the year attributed to this disease.

### THE ISOLATION HOSPITAL.

During the year, 14 cases have been admitted into the Isolation Hospital (23 being the number in the previous year, and 34 in 1895), which shows a very great diminution. Of the 14 cases, 13 were Scarlet Fever, and one Diphtheria. Of the 13 Scarlet Fever cases, 6 came from St. Mary's Parish, and, as stated above, four belonged to one family, and 7 from St. James'. The whole were of a comparatively mild type, and I am very pleased to be able to state that we had not a single death in the Institution during the year. The case of Diphtheria was that of a child 7 years of age, and although rather a severe case, I am happy to say, recovered.

I am very glad to be able to again confirm the high opinion I have expressed before that I have of Mrs. Adams, the Nurse, for I am sure she bestows every care and attention on all patients under her charge.

During the year we have lost the services of Mrs. Brett, the Assistant Nurse ; and it has been decided to try and obtain a much younger woman to act more in the capacity of Ward Maid and to be gradually trained as a Nurse for infectious cases, under Mrs. Adams' tuition.

The following list drawn up by the Sanitary Inspector shows the ages, diseases, dates of admission, and discharge of the several Patients treated in the Hospital during the year.

#### *Return of Patients admitted to the Isolation Hospital during 1897.*

##### ST. MARY'S PARISH.

Date of Admission. 1897.	Sex.	Age.	Disease.	Class of Patient.	Result.	Date of Discharge.
Feb. 11	F.	7	Scarlet Fever	Urb. San.	Cured	Mar. 22, 1897
April 16	F.	12	Scarlet Fever	Urb. San.	Cured	June 15, "
May 7	M.	6	Scarlet Fever	Urb. San.	Cured	" 26, "
" 7	M.	2	Scarlet Fever	Urb. San.	Cured	" 19, "
" 19	F.	4	Scarlet Fever	Urb. San.	Cured	" 26, "
" 19	F.	9	Scarlet Fever	Urb. San.	Cured	" 30, "

Total number of cases from St. Mary's Parish—6 ; all Scarlet Fever.

## ST. JAMES' PARISH.

Jan. 1	F.	19	Scarlet Fever	Urb. San.	Cured	Jan. 28, 1897
Jan. 15	F.	7	Diphtheria	Urb. San.	Cured	March 6, ,,
Feb. 4	M.	9	Scarlet Fever	Private	Cured	,, 23, ,,
April 12	F.	11	Scarlet Fever	Urb. San.	Cured	May 29, ,,
May 3	F.	6	Scarlet Fever	Urb. San.	Cured	June 1, ,,
Aug. 17	F.	21	Scarlet Fever	Private	Cured	Sept. 30, ,
Nov. 11	F.	1 $\frac{1}{4}$	Scarlet Fever	Urb. San.	Cured	Dec. 22, ,,
,, 30	F.	3	Scarlet Fever	Urb. San.	Cured	Jan. 4, 1898

Total number of cases from St. James' Parish—8 ; viz., 7 Scarlet Fever, ; and 1 Diphtheria.

As will be seen by the above list, the last case was discharged on January 4th, 1898, and since that date we have had no cases whatever in the Hospital, and what I am more than pleased to be able to say no cases occurring in the Borough requiring removal there.

## THE SANITARY CONDITION OF THE TOWN.

With regard to the general sanitary condition of the Borough during the year 1897, I think very few further words are required, the extremely low death-rate, viz., 14·4 per 1,000 speaking only too well for itself. There never has been any real outbreak of Infectious Disease, and what few cases have occurred during the year, by their prompt isolation either in their own houses, where such could be effectually carried out, or by removal to the Isolation Hospital, any spread of the diseases has been prevented.

With regard to the low death-rate this, I consider, may be accounted for by the extremely mild weather we experienced during the latter part of the year, for although there was a considerable amount of general illness such as ordinary colds and indisposition, there was nothing of a really serious nature at any time during the year.

I am again glad to be able to report that still more properties during the year have been connected with the main drainage, so that I hope before *many more years* are over I shall be able to say that we have no privies or dead wells in the Borough.

*Water Supply.*—As will be seen in the subjoined summary of the Inspector of Nuisances, there have been 26 cases in which the water supply has been condemned and fresh water supplied. In every case where practicable the Sanitary Authority have always recommended the laying on of the town water. It was thought, as stated above, that in consequence of the epidemic of Typhoid Fever at Maidstone, an independent analysis of the town water supply should be obtained. A sample taken from an ordinary house tap was therefore sent to Professor

J. Alfred Wanklyn, and I have much pleasure in here giving an exact copy of his report :—

*Report on a sample of Water from a deep well in the chalk formation at Bury St. Edmund's.*

“The sample of water was properly secured, being tied over and sealed when it arrived at my laboratory. It bore the following label.

Sample of deep well water from

J. Campbell Smith, C.E., Bury St. Edmund's,  
8th October, 1897.

The water was clear and bright, and quite without smell. I have made a complete analysis of it, and have obtained the following results :—

	Parts per Million.
Free Ammonia ... ...	0·00.
Albuminoid Ammonia ... ...	0·01.

Which shows the very highest organic purity. It is quite impossible for such a water as this to give Typhoid Fever.

The water is likewise quite free from poisonous metals.

Inasmuch as the water is derived from the chalk formation, it is of necessity somewhat charged with chalk, which is maintained in solution by means of the natural carbonic acid. The following are my results, on submitting the water to analysis :—

Specific Gravity—1000·43.

One gallon contains—	Grains.
Carbonate of Lime ... ...	18·55
Sulphate of Lime ... ..	1·19
Nitrate of Magnesia ... ..	2·40
Chloride of Sodium ... ..	2·50
<hr/>	
Total dry residue ...	24·64

Hardness—21 degrees.

It will be seen that by far the larger part of the saline matter dissolved in a gallon of this water consists of carbonate of lime, and, on boiling, nearly all of the lime separates and forms a powder which sinks down to the bottom, leaving a very soft water.

The water is excellent drinking water.

It is a hard water, but not harder than much of the water supplied to towns in this country. If it were considered desirable to soften the water, resort might be had to the Clark softening process, which answers perfectly and easily when applied to water of this character.

J. ALFRED WANKLYN, M.R.C.S.,  
Professor of Chemistry.

*The Laboratory,*

*New Malden, Surrey.*

*21st October, 1897.”*

With such a report before us, I think it behoves every owner of property in the Borough who has the least suspicion of his water supply to at once do away with it and lay on the town water.

The Bake Houses, 42 in number, were all inspected by myself in June, and by the Sanitary Inspector in December, and on each occasion were found to be generally exceedingly clean and well kept.

The 21 Slaughter Houses were inspected at intervals during the year and found, as a rule, to be clean and kept in good order. I am pleased to note that the new Bye-law which enacts that slaughter houses must have their license renewed year by year, is about to come into force, for under the old Bye-law if once a place was licensed as a slaughter house it would have been very difficult indeed to have done away with it.

The Cowsheds situated in the Borough have been inspected by the Borough Surveyor, and Veterinary Surgeon, who have reported them as being in a most excellent condition. By far the greater supply of milk to the town, however, comes from villages in the neighbourhood over which we have no control.

There has been an abundant supply of good wholesome meat and food generally, only one case of supposed bad tinned salmon being brought to my notice, which on careful inquiry and examination of samples taken from the same source of supply could not be substantiated in the least degree.

The Licensed Lodging Houses were inspected at intervals, by Superintendent Clarke, and reported to me as being clean and well kept, and the provisions of the Lodging House Act having been duly complied with.

## SUMMARY.

The following Table contains an abstract of particulars taken from the Inspector's Books, and contains a summary in brief of the practical Sanitary Work of the year :—

## ABSTRACT OF CASES

Entered in the Books of the Inspector for the year 1897.

Number of complaints received during the year	...	...	...	86
Number of houses and premises inspected	...	...	...	2040
RESULTS OF INSPECTION.				
Houses and premises cleansed, repaired, and whitewashed	...	...	...	20
Houses disinfected after infectious diseases	...	...	...	32
Number of articles of clothing and bedding disinfected at the disinfecting chamber	...	...	...	50
DEFECTIVE DRAINS, &c.				
House drains, cesspools, &c., repaired, cleansed, trapped, or ventilated	...	...	...	48
PRIVIES AND WATER CLOSETS.				
Repaired, cleansed, &c.	...	...	...	30
New privies provided	...	...	...	2
Supplied with water	...	...	...	2
MANURE BINS, ASHPITS, &c.				
Removal of accumulations of manure, animal and other refuse	...	...	...	110
WATER SUPPLY.				
Number of cases in which water has been condemned and fresh supply provided	...	...	...	26
Wells cleaned out	...	...	...	1
BAKE HOUSES.				
There are at the present time 42 Bake Houses in the Borough, which have been inspected at intervals during the year, and on the whole found clean and well kept	...	...	...	42
MILK AND FOOD SUPPLY.				
No report as to unsound Meat has reached me during the year, and I consider the Meat supply in general of excellent quality. Numbers of samples of Milk were taken from Milk sellers from carts and various parts of the town, and submitted to test, and found of good quality	...	...	...	12
FISH SUPPLY.				
During the year there has been a good supply of Fish.	...	...	...	...
MISCELLANEOUS.				
Number of Lodging Houses registered under Clause 76 of the Public Health Act, 1875	...	...	...	2
Over-crowding reduced	...	...	...	3
Removal of Animals improperly kept	...	...	...	6
Licensed Slaughter Houses inspected at intervals	...	...	...	17

ABSTRACT OF CASES (*continued*).

MISCELLANEOUS ( <i>Continued</i> ).								
Various cases of sickness, &c., brought under the notice of the Sanitary Authority, and steps taken to remove them to the Sanitary Hospital	...	...	..	...	...	..	...	14
Cases of Small pox	...	...	..	...	...	...	...	0
Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	13
Typhoid Fever	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0
Diphtheria	...	...	..	...	...	...	...	1
Cholera	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0
Membranous Croup	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0
Erysipelas	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0
Typhus Fever	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0
Puerperal Fever	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0
Legal proceedings	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0

ROBERT KERRAGE,  
*Inspector of Nuisances for the Borough of Bury St. Edmund's.*

I have the honour to remain, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

JAMES HODGES, M.R.C.S., L.S.A., A.K.C., London,

*Fellow of the Incorporated Society of Medical Officers of Health.*

Bury St. Edmund's,

February 24th, 1898.





